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Message Text

SECRET

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46
ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00

USIE-00 PM-07 NSC-07 SP-03 SS-20 RSC-01 L-03 SAM-01

H-03 SAB-01 SCCT-02 EUR-25 OMB-01 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 PRS-01 PA-04 SR-02 ORM-03 DRC-01 /126 W
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O 201640Z JUN 74
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8544
INFO DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T BEIRUT 7015

E.O. 11652: XGDS
TAGS: PMIL, IS, LE
SUBJECT: MIN NAT DEF MALOUF'S VIEWS ON CONTINUING ISRAELI
AIR RAIDS IN LEBANON, THEIR IMPACT ON LEBANESE
DEFENSE CAPABILITY, AND NECESSITY USG CONDEMNATION

REF: BEIRUT 6983

1. I HAD LUNCH ALONE WITH MIN NAT DEF MALOUF JUST
AFTER HEARING OF THIS MORNING'S IAF STRIKES AGAINST
REFUGEE CAMPS IN SOUTHERN LEBANON REPORTED REFTEL.

2. MALOUF WAS RELATIVELY RELAXED RE YESTERDAY'S AND
DAY BEFORE YESTERDAY'S IAF ATTACKS AGAINST FEDAYEEN
MILITARY UNITS IN SOUTHERN LEBANON. HE HOWEVER
QUESTIONED THEIR EFFICACY IN THAT FEDAYEEN WOULD JUST
DISPERSE AND MELD INTO LOCAL PEASANTRY. THIS MORNING'S
ATTACKS, HOWEVER, WERE A DIFFERENT MATTER FOR NOT ONLY
WERE THEY IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF LEBANESE URBAN AREAS, BUT
MORE IMPORTANTLY INVOLVED CIVILIAN NON-COMBATANTS. MALOUF
INQUIRED RHETORICALLY WHEN AND AT WHAT POINT WOULD ISRAEL
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STOP AND WOULD LEBANESE CITIES BE THE NEXT TARGETS.

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3. MALOUF ALSO STATED CATEGORICALLY THAT GROUND-TO-AIR MISSILES WERE FIRED FROM CAMPS AT ATTACKING AIRCRAFT. THIS CONFIRMATION OF SUCH A FEDAYEEN CAPABILITY RAISED SERIOUS PRACTCAL, POLITICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS FOR HIS MINISTRY. LEBANESE ARMY HAS NO RPT NO SUCH CAPABILITY AND HE EXPECTED SERIOUS QUESTIONING IN PARLIAMENT AND PRESS ATTACKS ON THIS ISSUE. IT ALSO PLACED HIM IN A MOST DIFFICULT POSITION VIS-A-VIS LEBANESE MILITARY WHOSE MORALE WAS ALREADY SUFFICIENTLY LOW AND WHO WOULD DEMAND WEAPONRY TO CARRY OUT THEIR DEFENSIVE MISSION.

4. MALOUF THEN INQUIRED RE OUR SUPPLYING TOWS AND ASKED IF I HAD ANY WORD FOLLOWING PRESIDENT FRANGIE'S DEMARCHE ON THIS SUBJECT. I TOLD HIM I HAD NONE, POINTING THAT TOWS WERE GROUND-TO-GROUND AND NOT GROUND-TO-AIR. HE AGREED, BUT EMPHASIZED THE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE TO HIS TROOPS AND OFFICERS OF HAVING AT LEAST A MODICUM OF MODERN WEAPONRY.

5. IN CONCLUDING THIS PORTION OF OUR CONVERSATION, MALOUF WHILE PROFESSING GREAT FRIENDSHIP WITH THE USG AND ADMIRATION FOR ITS LEADERS, SAID HE HAD BEEN SORELY PRESSED BY VARIOUS AND SUNDRY INDIVIDUALS THIS MORNING ALONG LINE THAT CONTINUING IAF RAIDS WERE DUE TO QUOTE GREEN LIGHT UNQUOTE GIVEN GOI BY OUR PRESIDENT. HE ALSO REFERRED TO MRS. MEIR'S STATEMENT UPON CONCLUSION OF GOLAN HEIGHTS AGREEMENT THAT ISRAEL WOULD HAVE USG'S POLITICAL BACKING IN RETALIATING AGAINST COMMANDO RAIDS FROM ABROAD. I REVIEWED AT SOME LENGTH RECENT HISTORY OF THIS SUBJECT AND DESCRIBED UNDERSECRETARY SISCO'S TESTIMONY BEFORE HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE. MALOUF ACCEPTED THIS PRESENTATION WITH GRATITUDE BUT THEN ASKED IF IT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE FOR USG PUBLICLY TO REITERATE THESE POINTS AND TO CONDEMN WHAT APPEARS TO BE NEVER-ENDING ISRAELI AIR ATTACKS AGAINST GOL. HE ALSO REFERRED TO PRACTICALLY DAILY ARTILLERY AND MORTAR ATTACKS AGAINST LEBANESE TERRITORY BUT SAID HE COULD TOLERATE THIS FOR FORTUNATELY CASUALTIES WERE MINIMUM AND ONLY DAMAGE WAS TO PROPERTY.
GODLEY

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Draft Date: 20 JUN 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
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Disposition Remarks:
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